

Bocce Ball

Bocce is similar to lawn bowling. The main difference is that a Bocce court has a backstop at each end and side rails, while lawn bowling is played on a free-form court.

Skills:

Use an underhand motion when throwing the bocce ball toward the pallino. Release the ball with the throwing hand either with the palm up, using wrist flexion, which imparts a forward spin on the ball ("Puntata"). A ball spinning forward will travel further on the ground. Releasing the ball with the palm down, extending the wrist, imparts backspin on the ball ("Volo"). The backspin throw will cause the ball to have more height and to travel a shorter distance on the ground. The ("Raffa") shot is like the "volo", shot but is closer to the ground and meant to dislodge an opponent's ball or disrupt a well placed formation of balls. "Raffa" is also called a smash shot.

Setup:

For lawn bowling you don't use a court. Find a level playing surface and mark off an area about 20X60 adult paces in a rectangular shape. For Bocce Choose a space that is reasonably level. Backstops are 12 ft wide with sides 4 ft long. Backstops are placed 60 ft apart. Backstops and side must be at least 4.5 inches high. Court surface can be stone dust, dirt, clay, grass, or artificial surface. To play you need a pallino ball (1 3/8"-2 1/4" in diameter), and each team will have 4 Bocce balls (4 1/5" in diameter). Softballs and a tennis ball may be substituted for the actual Bocce balls.

How to Play:

1. Teams consist of 1-4 players per side.
2. Players choose who goes first by coin toss. This first player throws the pallino into the opposite side of the court. This player then throws the first Bocce ball, trying to get as close to the pallino as possible. It is okay to hit the pallino, as long as the pallino doesn't go out of bounds. If it does, the opposite team re-throws it.
3. The opposing team then throws, until they get a ball inside their opponent's ball. Play continues in this manner until a ball is thrown inside or all four balls are thrown.
4. The first team goes again, this time trying to get a ball inside their opponent's ball. Play continues in this manner until a ball is thrown inside or all four balls are thrown.
5. The opposing team then throws any remaining balls to try to get inside the opposing balls for points.
6. For the 1-2 player teams, play to 12 points. 3-4 player teams play to 16 points. You may choose to play to 21 for casual play, or introduce a must win by 2 rule.
7. Each round of play is called a frame. Points are calculated at the end of each frame, one point is awarded for each ball that is closer to the pallino and inside another player's ball. A team can get as little as 1 point or as may as 4 points in a frame.
8. Players may knock opponent's balls away from the pallino, as long as the pallino ball stays within the boundaries. Players may use their own balls to block the pallino, making it more difficult for an opponent to get inside. Players may knock opposing team's balls away from the pallino.
9. If a Bocce ball is knocked out of bounds, it is disqualified.
10. Players may also use Bocce balls to hit the pallino away from opponents Bocce balls, to attempt to move it into a better location, or closer to one of their own balls. In doing so, the pallino, must stay in bounds.
11. When using backstops and sides, bank shots are possible and players may use corners to strategically place the pallino, making it harder for an opponent to get inside.